DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 372 141 UD 029 979

AUTHOR Williams, Francine; And Others
TITLE Managing Conflict.
INSTITUTION San Diego Unified School District, Calif.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 82p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Conflict Resolution; Educational Administration; Educational Environment; *Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Instructional Materials; Interpersonal Communication; Models; *Problem Solving; *Racial Relations; *Teaching Methods; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS *San Diego Unified School District CA

ABSTRACT

This package of materials is designed to provide schools with information, suggestions, and activities that can increase awareness of the nature of conflicts, conflict-resolution strategies, and the management of conflict and crisis situations. It focuses on developing a positive school climate that enhances intergroup relationships, encourages proactive recognition of potential problems, and provides suggestions for management of racial crises. The guide is organized into the following seven sections: (1) "Background (How To Manage the Inevitable)"; (2) "A Proactive Approach to Conflict Resolution"; (3) "Steps To Take to Lessen Racial Tension"; (4) "What To Do If a Racial Crisis Occurs"; (5) "Conflict Resolution Models"; (6) "Student Lessons in Teaching Conflict Management"; and (7) "Appendix," which contains suggestions for an administration's crisis response, the action-trial plan for junior high schools, and a form for successful practices in managing conflict. The guide offers some new and practical ideas to assist educators in teaching students new avenues for conflict resolution and communication and in providing a safe and orderly environment that is open to criticism, praise, and learning. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 372 141

MANAGING CONFLICT

> Conflicts are born out of **caring**. People do not fight about issues they don't care about....Conflict is a force that potentially unleashes people's imagination. Inherently, conflict is neither good nor bad; rather the outcomes of conflict can be good or bad, functional or harmful, positive or negative....Conflict is a process to be managed, not eliminated.
>
> W. Allen Randolph

PREPARED BY

Francine Williams
Paul Jenkins
Renée Rowan

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F. Williams
San Diego Schools

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

Revised 1994
Race/Human Relations
School Services Division - Area V
San Diego Unified School District

CUDX 9979

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTRODUCTION

The increased diversity of our school community brings with it an increased need for ethnic understanding, effective communications, and appropriate conflict management skills. This guide focuses upon developing a positive school climate that enhances intergroup relationships, encourages proactive recognition of potential problems, and provides suggestions for the management of racial crises.

This package of materials is designed to provide schools with information, suggestions, and activities that can increase awareness of the nature of conflicts, conflict resolution strategies, and the management of conflict/crisis situations.

The guide has been organized into 7 sections:

1. Background (How to Manage the Inevitable)
2. A Proactive Approach to Conflict Resolution: An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure
   - Discussion Groups
   - Getting Up Close and Personal – "To Know You Is to Love You"
   - Education
   - Activities
3. Steps to Take to Lessen Racial Tension
   - Central Issues
   - Administrators
   - Teachers
   - Counselors
   - Classified Staff
   - Area Assistant Superintendents
4. What to Do If a Racial Crisis Occurs
   - Planning for Potentially Disruptive Events
   - What to Do When a Racial Crisis Occurs
   - Follow-Up Meetings with Staff
   - The Role of the Site Administrator
   - After the Crisis or Significant Event
5. Conflict Resolution Models
   - Managing the Inevitable
   - Racial Tension Between Employees
   - Controversial Issues (District Administrative Procedure 4910)
   - Resolving Interpersonal Conflicts (Thomas-Kilmann Model)
   - Twelve Helpful Steps During Conflict Resolution
   - Some Helpful Tips for Moderating a Discussion on Controversial Issues
   - Conflict Resolution: Strategies for Success
   - Resources
   - Summary

6. Student Lessons Teaching Conflict Management
7. Appendix

    Administrative Crisis Response—Denial to Acceptance
    Lewis Junior High's "L.A. Trial Action Plan"
    "Managing Conflict - Successful Practices" Form

This guide is not intended to be the definitive guide on conflict resolution, but rather a quick reference to suggestions and ideas that work. It is a starting point for schools to use in dealing with conflict in the educational setting. It is hoped that schools will customize the information, build upon it, and share with others their successful techniques for dealing with conflict. A form has been provided in the appendix so that you may share your successful strategies with other schools.

Schools are doing many unique and exciting things to manage conflict. This guide provides validation of these efforts and offers some new and practical ideas that will assist educators, teach students new avenues for conflict resolution and communication, and provide a safe, orderly environment that is as open to criticism as praise.

During the period of student unrest in the spring of 1992, site and central office administrators expressed a desire to learn more about methods used to manage conflict—before a crisis exists, after it has begun, and following the occurrence. This guide is the answer to their requests.

> "You can't stir up something that isn't already there." – Jane Elliott

BACKGROUND

(How to Manage the Inevitable)

To Be or Not to Be!
Is Not the Question.
The Question is How to Be!

If all of us were alike, identically alike, we would agree on everything. The hours spent discussing which restaurant serves the best Mexican food, which movie to see this weekend, or when to take the next vacation could be used to find cures for diseases and explore the mysteries of the world around us. But it is the diversity surrounding us that makes the world interesting. It is our uniqueness that saves us from utter boredom.

Differences enrich our lives and surround us with a kaleidoscope of constant change. New ideas challenge us to reconsider our values, beliefs, and philosophies. Television, newspapers, books, friends, co-workers—we are surrounded with varying points of view.

When two points of view come into opposition, conflict occurs. Conflict, however, should not be viewed as bad or good, but simply as a sharing of views. A debate is an organized, regulated, and directed conflict. Ideas are exchanged that challenge each debater's point of view, and both parties have the opportunity to rebut the other. Ideally, no one gets hurt in a debate.

On the other hand, a hate crime[1] is conflict directed toward another without benefit to either person. Nothing is resolved, leaving fear and anger to slowly consume the perpetrator. Conflict, unchecked, can lead to racism, war, and even genocide.

Many fear conflict. Typically people surround themselves with those who think as they do, and avoid those who disagree. Frequent disagreements lead to the dissolution of the bonds that hold friends and family together.

> *Conflict avoidance is conflict abandonment. Ignoring the problem will not make it disappear. Few serious conflicts are surprises—most had their origins in prior, unresolved conflicts.*

---

[1]SWRL defines a hate crime as any act, or attempted act, to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, racial or ethnic slurs and bigoted epithets, vandalism, force or the threat of force, motivated all or in part by hostility to the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

Changes occurs daily within the San Diego Unified School District, especially changes in ethnic diversity. In the last 17 years, the student population has shifted dramatically (Figure 1), while the staff population has remained relatively constant. These changes alone set the stage for conflict, tension, mistrust, cultural misunderstandings and the reordering of relationships among groups of people.

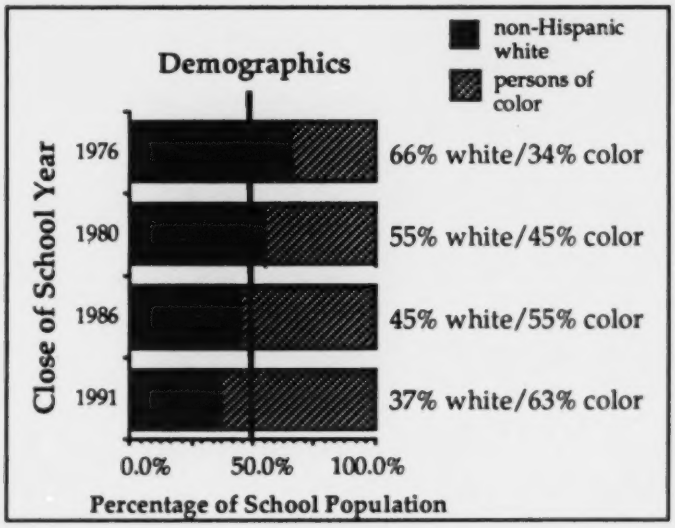


Figure 1
Changing School Demographics in the
San Diego Unified School District, 1976–1991

A change in diversity brings a change in the way and with whom we share our limited educational resources and the way(s) in which we meet the needs of our diverse population. It also means that there will probably be differences of opinion on how to accomplish these goals and that cultural differences will need to be addressed.

With change can come a variety of emotions: anxiety, fear, denial, feelings of powerlessness, but also positive emotions, such as pleasure, hope, and renewal. All of these emotions are absolutely normal.

We cannot control change in our world, but we can control how we react to it. When change is embraced as a challenge or a wondrous journey, it can lead to tremendous growth—and the successful contributions of **all** to society.

Racial tension and conflict must be addressed in a forthright and honest manner. When left unchecked, everyone suffers. The pain associated with racism knows no color line. Therefore, we cannot **NOT** (a double negative = a positive) address the issue of racism and its symptoms for fear of being called racist, blamed for the problem, or victimized. We must, as Eddie Orum suggests, "discard blame" and move to prevention and real, long-term solutions. Pointing fingers and placing blame does not solve the problem.

"We have nothing to fear but fear itself!"

Franklin Roosevelt

A Proactive Approach to Conflict Resolution: An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure

Start with the recognition that change brings tension and conflict. Discard the sense of guilt that accompanies racism. Add a hefty amount of multicultural education to promote an appreciation of diversity, large portions of problem-solving skills, and, frequently, enhanced student self-respect. If mixed well, the results will be an empowerment of youth to deal uniquely and effectively with the problems caused by change.

Eddie Orum
Principal, Phyllis Wheatley High School
Houston, Texas

Since conflict can be expected as a part of life, schools need a clearly identifiable system to resolve disagreements and provide for the orderly exchange of opinions. Managing conflict means providing both formal and informal avenues to provide parties with opportunities to hear and to be heard. A proactive attitude toward conflict resolution often diffuses volatile situations.

In some instances, parents, staff, students, and the community register their complaints to those in charge and come away feeling that they are being ignored, misinterpreted, put off, put down, talked down to, not taken seriously, or that their concerns are being minimized. For some young people, concerns and opinions are discredited because they are not good students. They also feel sometimes that instead of help with problem resolution, they are met with statements such as: "You didn't follow the right procedure," "At this school, this is how it is done," or "You should have talked to...." In instances such as these, those who have concerns may seek other avenues and arenas in which to be heard, such as the media, the superintendent, board meetings, or the courts, all of which in our society they have a right to do. However, most people do not want to go to such drastic steps if they are not necessary. They want issues addressed quickly and appropriate changes made. Therefore, it is extremely important that effective mechanisms be established for parents, staff, and community to register their complaints and concerns in ways that make them feel they are being heard and that appropriate resolution can be reached.

When issues are allowed to fester, they often reoccur and escalate. Sometimes escalation is triggered by events that may not have occurred on your campus, such as the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles or the death of a student in gang-related violence (particularly if one student's death is treated differently from another). If the underlying causes of the problems are not dealt with, they can be triggered repeatedly by similar events.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Therefore, it is important for schools to deal with racial problems and tension proactively as described below.

Discussion Groups

Include traditional and non-traditional leaders who represent the ethnic/racial composition of the school. Even the "D" and "F" students have a slice of reality that needs to be considered. These groups should meet regularly. Some suggested groups are:

- Student mediation groups
- Conflict busters
- Community forums – to better understand the issues of the community
- Classroom issue agendas
- Student forums
- Advisory classes
- Debates
- Climate control groups
- Discussions of controversial issues

Establish dual leadership chairs from different racial/ethnic groups and provide mechanisms for registering complaints.

Getting Up Close and Personal "To Know You Is to Love You"

- Does everyone know each other's name and something that makes each person unique? When we know each other, we are less likely to do things that we know we shouldn't.
  - Host receptions and special dinners
  - Provide intergroup interactions
  - Hold "Name That Person" contests
- Do adults and children speak to each other when passing in the halls? This is a sign of respect and acknowledgment and builds connections between the student and the school and its staff.
- Encourage staff members to make positive phone calls to parents regarding student behavior, achievement, etc.

Education

- Provide multicultural classes and information for students, staff, and parents.

- Whenever possible, provide students with newspapers and magazine articles about controversial issue(s) for discussion.

- Teach conflict management and problem-solving skills and how to discuss controversial issues.

- Expose students and staff to different cultures. ("Go beyond 'Tacos on Tuesday and Fried Rice on Fridays.'" — Mako Nakagawa)

- Provide opportunities for students to problem solve when they are not emotionally involved. These skills can then be transferred to emotionally charged situations.

- Provide students with knowledge about the contributions that their ethnic groups have made to the history of this country.

- Allow students to share their cultures with each other.

- Provide staff with multicultural materials, trainings on conflict resolution, and opportunities to apply new skills.

Activities

The clubs of the 50's might not be the clubs for the 90's.

- Offer clubs and activities at times students can participate. Remember, many work.

- Review the types of clubs and organizations offered on campus. Survey students to determine why they don't participate in some existing clubs and to find out what new clubs they would like to have.

- Ensure that the ethnic and racial makeup of the student population is reflected in club membership.

- Actively recruit the participation of students from all racial/ethnic groups.

- Hold joint functions sponsored by several clubs.

- Host pot lucks/community gatherings.

STEPS TO TAKE TO LESSEN RACIAL TENSION

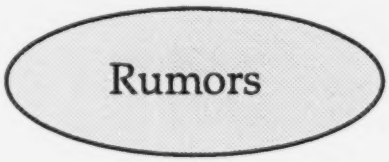
The good news is that there are steps that can be taken to reduce the racial tension at the school site. However, this takes the concerted efforts of staff, students, parents, and the community, as well as the district office.

Central Issues

In visiting and working with sites and the community, several central areas of concern surface over and over. These areas revolve around rumors, blame, expectations, respect, communication, and equity/fairness. These central issues tend to surface regardless of the ethnicity of the site administrator. Quite often, these major areas are the underlying constructs that accompany initial charges of racism. Therefore, they need to be examined and addressed appropriately at school sites.

An administrator once stated that when a parent called her a racist, rather than to becoming angry or mad, she asked the parent, "Tell me what it is that I am doing that makes you think I am a racist?" Armed with this information, the administrator was able to provide different feedback regarding the situation, better understand the parent's viewpoint, enter into constructive dialogue with the parent, and change her own behavior. The administrator also thanked the parent for this valuable information.

Some central issues are briefly discussed below:



The best way to address rumors is to provide staff, students, and parents with accurate and timely information. Use all avenues available to disseminate this information, such as the following:

- Regular home bulletins
- Special home bulletins
- Recorded messages on the school's hot line/answering machine
- Class visitations to provide students with accurate information
- Faculty meetings (regular and special). Staff should be kept apprised at all times; gaining their perspective and getting their input is critical.
- Compare notes with all key players on your site.

Always tell the truth. There is a tendency to minimize the extent of a problem because it may be embarrassing to you and the school. Remember that many parents in the

community will know if students were injured or suspended. (In some cases they will be able to tell you who and how many!) A school loses credibility with the community when the story it professes to parents and media differs from what they know is true. The actual crisis may end quickly, but rebuilding damaged credibility between school and community can take years.

Blame

It is not important to place blame, point fingers, go on a "who done it" mission, or try to figure out who on the staff gave out certain information or helped students/parents organize. This diverts energy and avoids resolving the situation. Additionally, it may cause others to view you as retaliating or witch hunting! Remember, the focus should be on the problem! Solving/resolving the problem should be the constant focus!

It's **US** against the problem, not **US** against one another.

Generally, if someone has done something inappropriate or insubordinate, it will surface in the problem-solving mode without making this a mission. Blaming can cause evasiveness and poor participation among staff, students, and parents. Often those who point the fingers wind up sabotaging themselves.

Expectations

- Make staff aware of your expectations and the process through which they should handle controversial issues or conflict.
- Make sure that everyone understands that problems should be addressed when they are small—long before they escalate.
- Inform staff, parents, and students about the problem-solving process. No one who has a burning issue wants to hear, "At our school, this is the way we solve problems," when he/she is upset.

Respect

- All students, staff, and community members want to be treated with dignity and respect.

- Students usually express issues of respect by saying, "They treat us like we are babies," "They never ask us our opinions," "I don't have to respect them (adults, school personnel) if they don't respect me."

- Parents feel a lack of respect if their opinions and ideas are not given a fair hearing, are not addressed appropriately, are ignored, or are treated as if they are unimportant.

- Sometimes staff members feel they are not respected when they are talked down to, talked to in a negative manner, or their ideas/suggestions are not valued.

The whole notion of respect must be examined by talking with people from various ethnic/racial groups to determine what is meant by the word and what specifically it looks like when it occurs and when it does not occur.

Some people feel respect is something you earn and others feel respect is something you are given (until you prove that you do not deserve it).

Communication

- Take time to make sure that the messages you send—nonverbal as well as verbal—are the ones you want to send.

- Sometimes parents complain that administrator(s) are not available to listen to them, to meet with their group, or to address their concerns. When they do meet with an administrator, they sometimes feel they are summarily dismissed when the administrator has heard enough.

- Enhancement of active listening skills is **absolutely essential** when resolving issues involving diverse communities. It is important to understand other perspectives and points of view. Once all points of view are clearly understood, the door for resolution is open.

Fairness/Equity

Rules should be applied fairly, and all children should receive a quality education. When groups see others as being treated differently, this is often viewed as prejudice and discrimination.

In talking with students of various racial and ethnic groups, it has been noted that White students feel that Hispanic and Black students are often treated differently. Many of the White students view this treatment as unfair. It causes them pain just as it causes the Hispanics and Blacks pain. We are all affected by prejudice and discrimination!

The following list identifies key actions that specific members of the school community can take to enhance racial climate:

Administrators

Communication

- Include parents of all ethnic groups and neighborhoods in organizations, councils, committees, and the governance team.
- Institute mechanisms which allow parents and students to feel safe when voicing their concerns regarding improving the school environment. Move toward resolution on these issues.
- Involve both traditional and **non**traditional leaders in the problem-identification/-solution procedure.
- **Actively listen** to parents, students, and **staff**.
- Remember that good communication is a two-way process.
- Show that you care about the concerns of others.
- If possible, maintain at least one phone line with an unlisted (or unpublicized) number. During a crisis, parents can tie up phones, making contact with the district office and police impossible.
- Purchase walkie-talkies, keep them charged, and train key staff in their use.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Discipline

- Enforce rules equitably and consistently for **all** students, regardless of race or socioeconomic status.
- Make sure **all** students, staff, and parents are familiar with the discipline policy; post rules throughout the school. Hold periodic meetings to explain the discipline policy and respond to questions.
- Inform students about the consequences of inappropriate behavior.
- When appropriate, solicit student input regarding changes, etc.

Leadership

- Maintain visibility and accessibility throughout the learning environment; be seen regularly walking the campus before/after school, and at lunch time. Parents, students, and staff need to know you, your position, your concern, and that you are willing to assist them.

Supervision

- Ensure that all areas of the campus are adequately supervised so that students can use school facilities, including restrooms, without fear of being intimidated or assaulted.
- Make sure that those on duty move around and interact in positive ways with the students.
- Provide inservices on supervision and effective supervision techniques.

Teachers

- Teach problem-solving skills, conflict resolution, cultural diversity, and race/human relations issues.
- Structure time for student interaction, class building, team building, and discussions of sensitive issues. Resolve playground/classroom conflicts using issue agendas or class meetings.
- Encourage an open exchange of ideas and opinions; teach students to value and respect differences.
- Make sure that all your students know their classmates by name; encourage them to learn something unique about each person.

Counselors

- Maintain a balance between academic/proactive counseling and disciplinary counseling.

- Attend all meetings and assist in developing holistic action plans for students.
- Lead small group discussions or classroom discussions/lessons on controversial issues/social concerns.
- Assist with teaching students problem-solving skills.
- Get to know as many students as possible by name; learn their interests, goals, and talents.
- Know the school's discipline policy and equitably enforce it; counsel students about school rules.
- Sponsor cross-cultural leadership groups.
- Demonstrate group dynamics skills for teachers with classroom lessons.

Classified Staff

- Provide appropriate support and assist students in their problem-solving efforts.
- Alert appropriate staff to potential problems.
- Follow the guidelines and process identified by the school in a professional manner when working with parents, students, and the community.

Area Assistant Superintendents

The area assistant superintendent can play a major role in conflict resolution by serving as a coach/teaching supervisor. In this type of relationship, it is extremely important to build trust with the site administrator and to allow for open, honest dialogue. This statement does not mean that these types of relationships are not already occurring—it means they must be enhanced.

The area assistant superintendent should assume principals know that it is OK to seek assistance about human relations issues and that this won't have an adverse effect on their evaluation or the supervisor's perception of them. In addition, the area assistant superintendent can encourage administrators to address issues early, before they build to a crisis. It is important to provide a safe environment for the exchange of ideas and information.

In many instances, it has been noted that area assistant superintendents have been able to successfully assist administrators in moving through the grief cycle that immediately follows a crisis.

For example:

> **One administrator, when confronted with a crisis, kept moving into denial, and the assistant superintendent gently reminded this person of this by saying, "You are in denial." This comment allowed the site administrator to move into solution strategies rather than remain in denial. Each time the administrator tried to go back to the denial state in subsequent meetings, the administrator was reminded to move beyond denial and to seek appropriate solutions.**

In another instance, the administrator had reached the approach-avoidance stage. This is generally the time when we take "two steps forward and two steps back." We begin to address the problem, feel that the pressure is off—things have calmed down—and then decide maybe we don't have to go all the way with implementation and back off. Cases have been noted in which area assistant superintendents have reminded site administrators of their promises and assisted with implementation. In these cases, the administrator and the school were able to implement long term solutions that effectively resolved the issues.

It is important that pats on the back for a job well done be given to administrators when they honestly and successfully manage crisis situations, sensitive issues, or conflicts. Praise should be specific: "I like the way you were able to get all staff members to work together," "You were able to make the parents feel comfortable by letting them know that you not only heard what they said, but understood their concerns," "You were able to see all sides of the issue and accurately summarized the different positions," "You really did an effective job of planning the utilization of all your available resources to resolve the problem." Opportunities should be provided for administrators to share effective solution strategies.

The area assistant superintendent must be willing to give honest, objective and constructive feedback when administrators need additional assistance, suggestions on ways to resolve issues, or comments about their immediate performance in handling the specific situation.

There is also a need to enter into dialogue with site administrators and to come up with a mutual definition of support so that all parties will know what to expect from each other. Does it mean you will support me even if I'm wrong? Or only if I'm right? Or that you will provide me with assistance to fix or adequately address the situation? Does it mean you will be honest with me in a kind and caring way? Or does it mean you will say, "Ain't it awful that the community is treating you this way...you've done so much," and offer no real solution strategies. These questions and perhaps others need to be addressed by the area assistantant superintendent.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Area assistant superintendents can encourage the administrative teams at school sites to freely work in a collaborative fashion and to equalize the playing field among each other so that honest dialogue without fear can occur. Sometimes these teams feel that they function in this way only to find out that this is not the case. Fragmentation usually shows up in times of crisis, particularly among those teams that are teams in name only. Examples of this fragmentation are:

1. All team members do not have the same information or "the total picture."
2. Some team members give parents and staff incomplete or erroneous information.
3. Team members do not actively support each other.
4. Individual team members play the "Lone Ranger" role because they do not share a common direction.

The administrative team must be able to focus in an effective problem-solving mode, recognizing that all members of the team should be respected regardless of their race, age, beliefs, etc. Effective problem solvers utilize diverse opinions and welcome these ideas with open arms.

Below are additional suggestions for area assistant superintendents.

- Observe administrators "in vita"—at faculty, staff, parent, and governance team meetings. Observations should be done routinely before problems occur.
- Provide constructive feedback after your observation. Alert the administrator to potential areas of concern you noted and areas in which you felt he/she did well. Give specific feedback!
- Review plans such as the discipline plan and governance team bylaws. Offer suggestions and check to ensure they are up-to-date, adequate, implemented fairly, provide progressive consequences, and involve the school/community in their development.
- Talk to students to find out how they feel about the school and what they think would improve it; assess their commitment to making the school the best possible.
- Encourage administrators to hold student forums and to implement appropriate student suggestions.
- Encourage administrators to develop mechanisms for parent/community dialogues; find ways to make these groups feel it is OK to share their concerns and that these concerns will be heard and understood.
- Seek the **truth**, not **sides**, in an objective and fair manner.
- When, selecting new administrators, seek to ensure a good fit between the administrator's skills and the school's needs.

- Provide administrators with training in human relations, race relations/integration, communication skills (especially *active* listening skills), and conflict management.
- Visit sites frequently on an informal basis to see the site in action, spending little, if any, time in the principal's office. ("Let's talk on the playground, or on the way to a classroom, or after the faculty meeting.")
- Have administrators develop R/HR goals as part of their Stull objectives.
- Share with administrators your tough experiences regarding conflict management.

Should a crisis occur at one of your school sites, be available to assist. Move around and assess all areas of the campus. Inquire about ways in which you can offer assistance. Try not to monopolize the administrator's time. (He/she needs to be out and about, directing key staff members, etc.) Provide the site administrator with suggestions and/or directions if needed. **Lastly, if it appears that no one is in charge, take charge.** Generally, crisis situations need immediate management.

After a crisis, encourage the principal to meet with all staff members. (You may want to participate in this meeting.) Also, encourage the principal to send home a bulletin which explains the situation, how it was handled, and other pertinent information.

Meet with the administrator to provide feedback and discuss what you feel he/she did well and what didn't go so well. Brainstorm additional solution strategies and plans and offer continued assistance. Encourage the administrator to address the underlying problems. *Generally a crisis is a symptom of other problems that have been allowed to go unresolved*. Continue to encourage the administrator to seek long-term solutions and to keep things on the table until they are effectively resolved.

Knowing that **we**—central office as well as the site—are in it together is extremely important during a crisis. Area assistant superintendents are vital to the conflict-management process and crisis intervention.

WHAT TO DO IF A RACIAL CRISIS OCCURS

Planning for Potentially Disruptive Events

Recent events, such as the Rodney King beating verdict, have been catalysts for disruption on some school campuses. It is important that school personnel anticipate situations which are emotionally charged and can cause a variety of reactions among students, staff, and the community. They should be prepared to address the situations in proactive ways.

Recently, Lewis Junior High School, in its "Plan to Minimize Disruption in Response to Anticipated Verdicts in the LA Trials," stated its basic expectations as follows:

1. **We *expect* students to have a variety of emotional reactions to these events. We want to *use* this experience as an opportunity to teach appreciation for differing points of view and safety of fellow students.**

2. **We expect adults on campus to manage the situation and direct appropriate responses for students both in discussion and behavior.**

It is critical that sites use potentially disruptive situations as opportunities for students to learn problem-solving skills and positive ways to express their concerns, while at the same time maintaining a safe and orderly environment for all students.

Schools can plan in advance how they will handle situations that may spark civil unrest. When formulating plans, consider the following:

- √ Identify key staff and meet with them to plan crisis intervention strategies and develop expectations for staff and student conduct.

- √ Fairly and equitably enforce all rules, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

- √ Make sure that all staff members understand their roles in a crisis and your expectations of them.

- √ Enlist the assistance and support of students, parents, and the community in developing plans.

- √ Clearly identify who is in charge, the chain of command, and the process for providing directions to staff and students.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- √ How will substitutes and other itinerant personnel be informed of their roles and responsibilities?

- √ How will homeroom/advisory periods be used? Will they be extended periods so that discussions can occur? Will there be an audible signal to indicate an extended period?

- √ How will you deal with students who roam the halls or campus?

- √ How will you assist students in getting to the appropriate place(s)? Will you establish specific traffic patterns?

- √ How will students access counseling services?

- √ What will be the role(s) for all support staff, teachers, and classified staff?

- √ How will students gain access to telephones, if needed? What will be your policy regarding telephone use?

Supervision (before school, during passing periods, recess, lunch; after school)

- √ Make provisions for additional supervision, traffic flow patterns, and positive interactions with students while on duty.

- √ Establish specific duty assignments and jobs for teachers and classified staff. ("Do not overreact, but observe and intervene when necessary."—Lewis Junior High School)

- √ Have teachers stand outside their classrooms to greet and positively interact with students, assist them with their problems, and provide additional supervision.

- √ How will disruptive students be handled?

- √ Determine which areas of the campus are "off limits."

- √ Identify the site official media representative. Be sure that staff understand that media requests/questions should be directed to this individual. Staff should assist the media in locating this individual.

What to Do When a Racial Crisis Occurs — Get a Grip!

At the onset of a racial crisis, you will need to act quickly. The following are successful practices used by the Race/Human Relations Crisis Team.

1. Ask for assistance. Contact the Race/Human Relatiions Crisis Team. (If possible, seek assistance from the Instructional Team Leader for Race/Human Relations **before** a conflict begins.)

2. Take charge. All key personnel need to be in contact with you via walkie-talkies, intercoms, notes, or in person.

3. Provide up-to-date and accurate information. Rumors and conflicting accounts can create additional confusion.

4. Take steps to ensure the safety of students and staff. This is the site's primary concern. Place adults at school entrances and exits, at intersections of hallways, and wherever groups of students begin to congregate. Often the mere presence of adults in an area will cause students to scatter. Be positive, calm, and proactive.

5. Set up channels of communication. Gather facts and maintain constant assessment of the situation. Few students or staff know the details at the beginning of an incident, and no one is immune from fear. Have teachers read bulletins to class and send home special bulletins. Use your school's answering machine to relay information regarding the situation.

6. Let students talk. Give students the opportunity to voice their concerns through classroom discussions or informal assemblies. Encourage students to use videotape or the school newspaper (special edition) to share their opinions.

7. Limit and monitor phone use. Outgoing phone calls from students or staff during a crisis can set off a chain reaction of panic in the community.

8. Medical assistance may be necessary. Keep accurate records on the numbers of students and staff requiring medical assistance and the type of assistance needed. This is an area where rumors abound.

Follow-Up Meetings with Staff

After any crisis, meetings should be held (preferably the same day) with all staff members to do the following:

- Discuss the events of the day and how they were handled; develop appropriate follow-up.
- Allow staff an opportunity to debrief, vent, and share information from their perspective.
- Plan and organize supervision; outline expectations for the following day.

- Provide staff with up-to-date and accurate information.
- Thank staff for their assistance.
- Determine areas where improvement or different action might be needed.

In times of crisis, the best source of assistance is the staff. Involve them in the process—too often they are overlooked or are underutilized. After all, they know the children better than anyone else.

The Role of the Site Administrator

The role of the site administrator should be clearly designated in the plan. Everyone should know who is in charge and the appropriate chain of command.

- The administrator should designate a specific person to be in charge should a crisis occur during the administrator's absence. Review designee's role with him/her prior to a crisis.

- The administrator should not be assigned to a specific station, nor should he/she stay in the office to make phone calls or coach from a distance. He/she should be roving around, constantly assessing the situation, and determining appropriate ways to address events as they occur.

Below are additional suggestions for the site administrator:

- Serve as the media contact or designate a specific staff member to serve in this capacity. Notify the staff that any request for information by the media should be forwarded to you or your designee.
- If outside groups/agencies are utilized, coordinate their services on campus.
- Maintain the safety of **all** on campus.
- Address problems/crises in a calm manner. This enhances one's ability to make appropriate decisions and to problem solve, and shows staff and students that things are under control.

After the Crisis or Significant Event

The hard work begins after the crisis or significant emotional event is over. This is the time to build or rebuild relationships, develop mutual trust, and provide appropriate action plans that allow for ongoing problem solving. It's a time when it is human nature to say the problem's over and we are going back to business as usual. We are immersed in the approach-avoidance phase of problem-solving—we may begin to approach true

solutions, but then decide we don't really have to do it. We can avoid it because, after all, everything is back to normal!

It is important that schools not be lulled into complacency just because things may appear to be calm or normal. After a crisis is the time for schools to show that "the proof is in the pudding" by their actions and meaningful, ongoing problem solving. It is a time when others will be checking to see if you are a person (or school) of your word, and if you truly try to solve problems or merely issue Band-Aids.

This is the time to:

1. Review your plans, and make appropriate changes.

2. Develop ongoing site-specific action plans to solve issues that were brought out during the crisis. These might be in the areas of: discipline, fairness in applying rules, etc.

3. Send home special bulletins; use your answering machine to provide information to parents. Hold parent meetings to explain the facts surrounding the incident.

4. Institute or revise mechanisms for students, staff, parents, and community to register their future concerns about the school so that these issues can be addressed proactively, before they become major problems.

5. Respond quickly and fairly to student agitators. School leadership should meet immediately after an incident to identify the students involved and to begin appropriate disciplinary action. Hold conferences with suspended students and their parents.

6. Do "reality checks" with others to make sure you are not slipping into denial or approaching avoidance. For this purpose, select people you trust and who you feel will give you honest feedback.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODELS

Preserving dignity, listening for the message even if you don't agree with it, respecting others as they are, and expressing your views comprise an attitudinal framework helpful in resolving disagreement. With these principles, you communicate, "I honor you and your needs; I take responsibility for letting you know where I stand. We can manage our differences constructively."

Kindler
Managing Disagreement Constructively

"For every problem, there is a simplistic and straightforward solution that is wrong."
— Albert Einstein

Managing the Inevitable

The steps in "Resolving Inerpersonal Conflicts" (included in this section) should be followed in order and never skipped. For example, skipping from Step 2 (Generate Possible Solutions) to Step 4 (Decide Which Solution Seems Best) without doing Step 3 (Evaluate the Possible Solutions) may actually compound the problem. Such an omission may lead to implementing a solution that is unacceptable to one of the parties, and, therefore, doomed to failure.

Whenever possible, problems should be solved by those involved rather than having solutions imposed upon them from outside. Try to avoid using parent words such as, "It's for your own good"; "This is what you should do"; "When I was. . ."; or "If I were you. . ."

Judgments should not be made based solely on the face value of a situation. For example, it is unfair to punish a student for being physically aggressive without making an attempt to determine what might have triggered his or her behavior. Unobserved antagonistic behavior by another student may have played a major part; verbal aggression or body language can be just as strong a trigger for conflict as a physical attack. Generally something precedes physical aggression which is not easily viewed.

As educators we must hold back on our natural tendency to want to solve problems quickly. It is important to allow time for a thorough investigation to determine the root cause(s) of the problem.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The tendency to move quickly through the process will diminish the opportunities for successful resolution by not generating enough possible solutions. Similarly, choosing a solution early in the process, and then moving through the steps to confirm or deny its feasibility will lessen its chances of success. Problem solving requires emotional detachment in the solution-generating process. If you, or members of your staff, are unable to move through the six steps without a vested interest in the outcome, ask the Race/Human Relations Instructional Team Leader for assistance.

The "Twelve Helpful Steps During Conflict Resolution" model that follows provides suggestions for the leader's behavior during conflict resolution. Particularly important is Step 5, "Start Small." Many large, complicated problems can be broken down into smaller, more manageable parts; resolving these parts can lead to a sense of movement toward resolving the larger problem. Issues that have become problems over the years may take time to resolve, but tackling pieces of the problem can give a feeling of progress.

Another useful document included in this section is "Some Helpful Tips for Moderating a Discussion on Controversial Issues." This list of DO's and DON'Ts will assist leaders in setting a safe environment for the discussion of controversial issues and can be used in staff and committee meetings, as well.

The techniques provided in this section should be utilized and refined on an ongoing basis. With practice, you will become more comfortable and confident in their use.

Racial Tension Between Employees

Racial tension sometimes occurs between employees. In these cases, use of the identified conflict resolution models is appropriate. It is important to actively listen and give early assistance to adults in honestly resolving their concerns.

The EASE model ("Conflict Resolution: Strategies for Success") at the end of this section may also be of help. In some cases, negotiation and mediation may be needed; if so, Race/Human Relations resource teachers are available to assist.

In some instances, adult conflicts might venture into a personnel issue. If this happens, unions, the Human Resources Division, and the Affirmative Action Office may need to become involved.

Controversial Issues

District Administrative Procedure 4910

The district's basic philosophy and objectives for moderating discussions on controversial issues are included in Administrative Procedure 4910, which states in part:

> The district recognizes that controversial issues are inherent in the educational process. Each of us is an individual. Our individualities and personalities have their roots in our different backgrounds and find expression in our differing points of view. Our opinions, therefore, are important to us as individuals. Whenever people discuss issues upon which opinions differ, they are dealing with controversial issues and emotions usually are involved.
>
> Controversy may arise at unexpected times. Teachers must control situations in order to provide a constructive learning experience. Skill in dealing with controversy is gained through *planned* discussions on controversial issues related to the regular instructional program. Teachers should be objective, impartial, unprejudiced, and unemotional. They should lead students to express opinions on both sides of any question. Student thinking will be stimulated when the teacher points out both strong and weak points of an unpopular position. In doing this, care must be taken that students understand the teacher's purpose in raising questions or making comments regarding an unpopular cause.
>
> Objectives in the study of controversial issues are:
>
> a. To improve ability to discriminate between fact and opinion.
> b. To increase skill in critical thinking.
> c. To develop ability to identify propaganda techniques, including questioning sources of information.
> d. To provide insight into the source of one's own bias or prejudice.
> e. To develop an appreciation of rights of others to their own opinions.
> f. To instill a deepened understanding of American ideals and institutions.

Resolving Interpersonal Conflicts
(Thomas-Kilmann Model)

1. **DEFINE** the problem.

   All parties enter into the problem-solving willingly. Be sure to state the **problem** (unmet need, not a solution). Use active listening to help the other person(s) express his/her needs.

2. **GENERATE** possible solutions.

   Encourage participation with "door openers." For example, ask, "What are some of the possible solutions to this problem?" Accept all ideas—the more the merrier. Encourage even wild or unique solutions. You may want to write down each proposed solution. Do not evaluate or judge proposed solutions.

3. **EVALUATE** the solutions.

   Cross off any idea that either party rejects for whatever reason. Use "I" messages to state your own feelings. For example, "I couldn't accept that idea because..." Take time for everyone to have a say.

4. **DECIDE** which solution(s) seem best.

   Test the proposed solution—imagine how it would work if it were chosen. Work toward consensus. Do not adopt a solution until everyone agrees to try it. Check out any messages where people have less than positive feelings about the consensus. Write down the agreed-upon solution.

5. **DETERMINE** how to implement the decision.

   Decide who does what by when. Write it down! Have all parties sign it! Agree on a time to check out whether the decision is working.

6. **ASSESS** how well the decision is working.

   Talk again at the agreed-upon time. "Has the problem disappeared?" "Did we make good progress in correcting the problem?" "Was it a good decision?" "Are we happy with what we did?"

(Adapted from Thomas Gordon, *Teacher Effectiveness Training*)

Twelve Helpful Steps During Conflict Resolution

1. Listen to what is said and is not said (especially when the person is angry). Sift through the emotion.
2. Examine faces—investigate the signals (eyes, hands, feet, etc.).
3. Listen to the action and not the words.
4. Validate— be sure you get what they said; restate.
5. Start small—tackle what you can agree on when setting goals.
6. Demonstrate behavior first—model it. Ask first, "How can I help?"
7. Stay on target.
8. Minimize costs of the agreement—it's easy to say yes.
9. Build a successful model of working together—set parameters.
10. Follow through. Make sure whatever you said will happen, happens. Look, listen, and stay on track.
11. Build a win/win situation.
12. Never give up!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Some Helpful Tips for Moderating a Discussion on Controversial Issues

Opening: Establish a friendly, informal, and "safe" atmosphere from the start. Don't forget the power of humor.

DO's

DO create opportunities for all participants to discuss issues on an equitable basis. Create a climate for non-evaluative and non-critical audience participation and encourage active audience listening skills.

DO stay personally neutral. Resist "straw votes" and other moves to "resolve" the issue.

DO clarify your role with the group in advance.

DO make sure the group understands the discussion guidelines (usually established and reviewed beforehand).

DO play the role of timekeeper by moving the group when a point has been fully discussed.

DO summarize the group's discussions from time to time—or call on the recorder to do so.

DO be prepared to intervene, to interpret questions and points of discussion, and to handle controversies.

DO focus intervention on one point; make interventions short and simple.

DO help the group explore deeper dimensions of a topic. Each person arrives at his or her own judgment after extensive discussion of the choices and trade-offs involved.

DO return a question to the person who asked it or to another person so that the moderator does not take responsibility for the question.

DON'Ts

DON'T let any one participant dominate the discussion.

DON'T take sides.

DON'T insert your personal feelings.

DON'T allow the group to make you an "expert" or "answer person."

DON'T drive the group too rigidly.

DON'T allow the group to drift without guidance.

DON'T resort to such formal processes as *Robert's Rules of Order*—you are not seeking a majority opinion.

DON'T talk too much.

DON'T make value statements about what individuals have to say or about the group process.

Closing: Provide a summary to pull together related ideas, restate positions, elaborate on the choices inherent in the issue.

Relax and try not to worry. Often times you are following the above guidelines without being aware that you are doing a terrific job of moderating; in fact, there are probably several of the above points that you have been doing naturally! Have a good discussion!

Source: *National Issues Forums Leadership Handbook.* Dayton, Ohio: National Issues Forums, 1990–1991.

Conflict Resolution: Strategies for Success

1. **ENCOURAGE TEAMWORK** and healthy, open communication among your employees by providing:
   - Regular staff meetings
   - Incentives for cooperation
   - Attentiveness to signs of lowering morale among your employees

2. **DEMONSTRATE** to your employees that you care about their needs, opinions, and problems. Be approachable and be a good listener. If an employee has some personal problems, don't deny the problem. Suggest to the employee that he or she contact EASE.

3. **INFORM** your staff in a timely fashion of changes, policies, and your performance expectations.

4. **TAKE TIME** to understand the problem.

5. **DON'T IGNORE** the problem and hope it will disappear. It won't.

6. **PRAISE** individual employees for their efforts while reinforcing the "we" that comprises your whole team. The team feeling can be reinforced by encouraging employees to participate in goal setting for the team.

You Know That Team Feelings are Lacking When you Hear the Following:

1. **That's not my department.**
2. **No one told me to go ahead.**
3. **That's his job, not mine.**
4. **I'm so busy, I just can't get around to it.**
5. **I wasn't hired to do that.**

Arthur Bloch, *Murphy's Law, Book Three*

From EASE (Employee Assistance Service for Education): 277–EASE (3273)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Resources

Videos (available at the Race/Human Relations Office)

Upper Elementary-Junior High Level
Solving Conflicts
Fighting Fair

Secondary Level
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention for the Educator
The Disruptive Adolescent (Vol. II)

District Curriculum Materials

Seek Out Success (SOS), 1987
Guide: Publication No. II–B–87–3
Teacher's Manual: Publication No. II–B–87–1

District Services

Race/Human Relations

Guidance/Counseling

Humanities (Social Studies)

(EASE) Employee Assistance Service for Education: 277–EASE (3273)

Affirmative Action Department

Summary

Conflict is a fact of life, and planning for conflict is an integral part of sound management practice. Maintaining channels for the resolution of conflict, no matter how serious, will improve relations between school and community. Resolving conflict is an ongoing process.

STUDENT LESSONS
TEACHING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Student lessons are intended to provide students with opportunities to build a sense of belonging to the group as well as to develop conflict resolution skills. Lessons should be taught in the order presented since class-building and team-building are prerequisites to the more complex skills presented later.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ROPES

Grade Level: 4–12

Objective: Students will participate fully in discussions that involve sensitive and/or controversial issues

Materials: Student Handout ("ROPES")—one per student; Overhead Transparency ("ROPES") or poster-sized rendition

Background Information: The name ROPES comes from an activity used in the Anti-Defamation League's prejudice reduction program *A World of Difference*. This adapted ROPES strategy assists students, teachers, and parents in participating in discussions that involve differences of opinion and/or points of view.

Setting the Tone: Whenever a discussion takes place, be it in the home, school, or workplace, differences of opinion may take place. Differences are sometimes misunderstood and can create conflict. But imagine what the world would be like if we all agreed on everything or if differences were not allowed. The ROPES strategy assists all of us in recognizing that differences in opinions can serve as a tool to help us see situations from varying perspectives, as well as learn the value of diversity. ROPES also provides practice in problem solving.

Student Learning: Ask students if they know what an acronym is. If the answer is not provided, give the definition of an acronym as a "a word formed from the beginning letters of other related words." Tell students that ROPES is an acronym.

Distribute Student Handout and, using the transparency or poster, go over each concept represented in the ROPES strategy.

(Note: Each letter in ROPES represents a concept that could stand on its own, but when taught with the other concepts becomes an all-encompassing strategy for teaching respect for differences.)

ROPES

R is for RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY

RESPECT is not necessarily agreeing with or liking another person's opinion, but acknowledging that each person is entitled to not only have an opinion, but to voice it as well.

RESPECT means that we can agree to disagree. Should I disagree with your opinion, our friendship/relationship is not at risk.

RESPECT is demonstrated by listening to another person's point of view without interrupting, "putting down" the person, or otherwise disrupting the discussion.

RESPONSIBILITY. Each one of us is responsible for ourselves. We have a personal RESPONSIBILITY to conduct ourselves in a respectful manner. We also have a RESPONSIBILITY to speak out when a discussion involves an issue that we agree or disagree with.

O is for OOPS, OUCH, and OPENNESS

OOPS. Sometimes when discussing sensitive issues, we say things we didn't mean to say—things that may be hurtful to another person in the discussion. OOPS are things we didn't mean to say.

When an OOPS occurs, often it causes an OUCH. An OUCH happens when a person is hurt by another's words.

OPENNESS allows people to acknowledge an OOPS or an OUCH without fear that others will judge them or be resentful. OPENNESS allows one to say, "I accept RESPONSIBILITY for my words, and RESPECT others for pointing out that I have said something—consciously or unconsciously—that was hurtful or inappropriate."

P is for PARTICIPATION and PERCEPTION

PARTICIPATION. Each of us participates differently in discussions. Some people enjoy discussing issues in large groups, others prefer small groups, and yet others only feel comfortable when speaking with one other person. The way we participate is based on our personal style, and we need to RESPECT each person's style of PARTICIPATION.

PERCEPTION is a key ingredient in ROPES. The way one person views another individual can influence RESPECT, the acceptance of RESPONSIBILITY, and the way the person PARTICIPATES in the process.

E is for EDUCATION, EXPLORATION and ESCUCHAR (Listen)

EDUCATION. If we allow ourselves to learn one new thing during our discussions, we will come closer to achieving a world where differences are truly appreciated. If we give ourselves permission to EXPLORE, we may discover the answers to many unsolved social issues. But most of all, if we LISTEN (ESCUCHAR) to one another with openness and respect, we can conquer the fears that divide us.

S is for SENSITIVITY and SAFETY

SENSITIVITY. The degree to which each of us is sensitive varies depending on the topic of discussion. Our SENSITIVITY relies on our PERCEPTION of the situation and the individuals involved. Even the most sensitive person can say something that can cause an OUCH. Even a person who is perceived as being the most insensitive may acknowledge an OOPS.

SAFETY is that attitude that ensures that a person can participate fully and openly in a discussion and still be treated with respect. It means that when a person speaks, he or she will not be chastised or put down. Thus, people are encouraged to continue to express their points of view.

Adapted by Renée Rowan

Overhead Transparency

ROPES

Ropes are ground rules that allow individuals to participate fully in discussions that involve sensitive and/or controversial issues.

R	=	Respect/Responsibility
O	=	Oops/Ouch/Openness
P	=	Participation (which includes the right to pass) Perception
E	=	Education/Exploration/Escuchar (Listen)
S	=	Sensitivity/Safety

Adapted by Renée Rowan

GET ACQUAINTED

Grade Level: 4–8

Objective: Students will develop the understanding that prejudging does not give us the true facts about a person.

Materials: "Get Acquainted Form" (one per student)
pencils

Setting the Tone: Explain to students that sometimes we form opinions of others before we really get to know them. Tell students that today they will participate in an activity that will help them better understand the meaning of prejudging.

Student Learning: Have students select partners. Tell them to sit together, but not to speak to one another. Distribute copies of the "Get Acquainted Form" (one per student). Tell students to complete the form, answering the questions strictly by observing their partners.

Say: "Don't talk. Just look at your partner and answer the questions as best you can."

Have the partners exchange forms and discuss the responses to determine how many were correct.

Closure: When the verbal exchange has been completed, give students a minute to share with class what each partner thought about the other before the two had a chance to converse.

Have students discuss the ways words help us have a better picture of the facts about a person.

GET ACQUAINTED FORM

How old do you think your partner is? _____

Where do you think your partner was born? _____

In which month do you think your partner was born? _____

Interests: (Check the ones you think your partner is interested in.)

____ Dancing	____ Reading	____ Biking
____ Sports	____ Artistic/Creative Activities	____ Travel
____ Music	____ Writing	____ Horses
____ Camping	____ Photography	____ Movies
____ TV	____ Gourmet Foods	____ School

Check the statement that you think best tells about your partner.

My partner:

____ Is fun to be with.

____ Is a leader.

____ Is self-confident.

____ Is open to new ideas.

____ Makes friends easily.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SHARING

Grade Level: 3–12

Objective: Students will develop awareness of their connectedness through a coooperative process of sharing about their lives, using a pair-share interview or sharing process, with the partners introducing each other to the total group.

Materials Needed:
3" x 5" index cards
pencils
chart paper

> **Note:** If this lesson is used with elementary level students, you may want to generate ideas on a chalkboard or chart paper.

Setting the Tone: Tell students: "Today's lesson will give you a chance to learn some interesting things about each other. At the end of the lesson, we'll discuss why or why not this lesson was important."

Student Learning: Ask students to line up by the month of their birth, with January at the beginning of the line. **Do not give any other directions.** Observe the level of cooperation to complete the task.

Once the line has been established, ask the left end to begin to wrap around so that the first person on the left is paired with the first person on the right, and so forth. Have students face their partners and share the following information with each other:

- Their full names
- How they got their names
- Something they are proud of

> **Important:** Tell participants to share only that which they wouldn't mind having shared with the larger group.

Have volunteer pairs share each other's personal information.

Modeling. Have pairs sit together. Distribute cards for note-taking, and have each pair decide who will be Person A and who will be Person B. Model the process of introduction to provide a focus for the students. This will help them generate their own life stories with less difficulty.

Another way to help generate ideas is by asking:

> What kinds of things would you like to know about a person or his/her life? For example, if a new student arrived in this class, what kinds of things would you wonder about?

Write the ideas on the chalkboard, and model an introduction.

The Introduction Process. The introduction of pairs should be done in a circle where each introducer stands behind the person being introduced. The introducer may put a hand on his/her partner's shoulders as this establishes connectedness and warmth between the two. It also promotes feelings of self-worth within the person being introduced.

Instruct students to begin the introduction with, "This is my friend...," or "I'd like you to meet my friend...," or "It's my pleasure to introduce you to...." Once the first student has been introduced, have partners switch roles, with the second student saying warmly, "...and this is my friend....

Distribute index cards and pencils.

Ask Person B to share his/her autobiography with A. Then switch so that A tells his/her autobiography to B.

Guided Practice:

Once sharing between pairs has been completed, have a volunteer pair introduce each other to the group.

The ideal situation is for everyone to introduce and to be introduced. (If time does not allow this, suggest that the process be continued at another time.)

Feedback:

After the introductions, ask for individual feedback by posing questions such as:

1. What value do you think this activity has?
2. What did you learn by doing this activity?
3. How did you feel when your partner shared personal information about himself/herself with you?

4. How did it feel telling your partner about yourself?
5. What discoveries did you make today?
6. Were there any surprises ?
7. Did you learn that you have things in common with classmates that you didn't know about before?
8. Did you learn something new about a person whom you thought you knew very well?

Closure

Say: "I know you have learned—and more importantly, experienced — how the willingness to share ourselves with others enriches our lives by building friendships based on trust, honesty, common interests, experiences, and mutual respect. You have had an opportunity today to experience each other as individuals."

SQUIGGLE ART

Grade Level: K–8

Objective: Students will define a set of behaviors needed to complete a task cooperatively and then use those behaviors in a practical exercise.

Materials: packs of 4 pens (red, yellow, blue, and green)
white paper, 8-1/2" x 11"

Setting the Tone: Read a list of people and activities and ask students to think about what they all have in common. The list might include the Chargers, the students' school, San Diego Gas and Electric Co., the students' families, the Ringling Brothers Circus, the Congress of the United States, Pop Warner football, Sea World, and so on.

Listen to and validate student responses, but lead the discussion to a key element in today's lesson: teamwork. All of the groups mentioned above are dependent on teamwork for their survival and success.

Student Learning: Tell students they will be working in cooperative teams today. Ask students for their ideas on what they need to do or how they need to behave in order to work together in a group to complete a task (job).

List student responses on the chalkboard. Explain to students that their responses will be the ground rules for groups to use in this lesson; have all students agree to follow these ground rules. Establish the "quiet" hand signal to be used when you or someone else needs to be heard.

Have students line up according to some criterion (month they were born, etc.); then have the line curve around until each student is facing a partner. Ask students to give a big welcoming smile to the person they are facing, showing their willingness to work cooperatively with a classmate.

Ask students to interview their partners, using some focus question that relates to family or school. Suggested questions might be:

How many brothers and sisters do you have?
What's your favorite food and hobby?
What do you want to do as a career?
What subject do you like most in school?

Have pairs of students join other pairs to form teams of four. Ask them to sit together somewhere in the classroom.

Guided Practice:

Have each team select a member to go to the front of the class to get four pieces of paper and a pack of pens, one color for each team member.

Explain what a squiggle is and draw one on the chalkboard (zig-zag, curved line, etc.).

Say: "Make a squiggle on your sheet of paper. After you have made the squiggle, pass your paper to the person on your right. That person should add a little piece to your squiggle. If you notice a pattern forming when you receive a paper, you might want to continue the same pattern when you add your own squiggle. Continue passing the papers around your group until all four papers include connected squiggles by everybody."

When the task is completed, ask members of each team to agree on one piece of art to represent the team. Emphasize the fact that the art is a team product and belongs to the whole group. (Group consensus is an important process and may or may not occur immediately.)

After each team has chosen one piece of squiggle art, have the team create a name for it and write it on the paper. Then have each team presents its art to the rest of the class and tells its name.

Squiggle art is great for classroom displays!

Feedback:

It is important to debrief the process and elicit student feelings about:

1. Working with or without best friends.
2. Deciding in their groups who will hand out materials.
3. Working on a team product.
4. Agreeing on things—what helps and what doesn't.
5. Using words and behaviors that help the group process, that help students work together as a team to get the job done; using words and behaviors that discourage, rather than encourage.
6. Deciding how easy or how hard it was to stick to the ground rules.

Closure:

Point out to students that working as part of a team is not always easy. Say: "Many people enjoy working independently and are successful with that approach. There will be times in life, however, when one's success is closely linked to participation in groups. Unless we learn to appreciate these opportunities to team with others and become skilled at working in that manner, we may miss out on the chance to learn about ourselves and our abilities."

BRAINSTORMING

Grade Level: 7–9

Objective: Students will learn the technique of brainstorming as a means of solving problems.

Materials Needed: newsprint or poster-sized paper
marking pens (various colors)

Background Information: Brainstorming is a very valuable technique for creative problem solving. The frequent use of brainstorming encourages a versatile, creative way of thinking.

Setting the Tone: The object of brainstorming is to produce a great quantity of useful ideas about a given subject or problem in a short period of time. This great quantity of ideas is then used for later organization and/or evaluation. The broader this data base, the more likely it is to throw new light on a problem or to lead to creative solutions.

Brainstorming, done effectively, should remove competition from problem solving and focus group attention on the problem to be solved. Brainstorming can be done by the entire class or in small groups. (Five or six is a good size.) When small groups brainstorm, have the recorder from each group share the list with the entire class.

There are many ways to share group lists—have each group member choose a favorite idea from the list and then have the group share its condensed list; pair groups and have them share their lists with each other, or have recorders meet and compile a master list for class perusal. If the entire class brainstorms, have three recorders at the board writing ideas as they are mentioned. (Waiting with your hand raised stifles the free flow of ideas.)

Brainstorming rules should be reviewed often and the rationale discussed with the class. Write the following on the chalkboard:

Rules of Brainstorming

1. No negative comments.
2. Strive for quantity, not quality—the longer the list, the better.
3. Expand on each other's ideas.
4. Encourage "far-out" ideas.
5. Record every idea mentioned, using key words or brief phrases.
6. Set a time limit.
7. It''s okay to pass.

Student Learning:	Have students form cooperative groups, with each member selecting a different colored marker. Have students brainstorm their concerns/issues involving a school topic, such as the food in the cafeteria. Have them circle common concerns and underline concerns that are not shared by everyone. Have groups prioritize their concerns and then propose resolutions for the top three items on their list. Have all groups meet together as a total class to present their concerns and proposed solutions.
Extension	Submit a proposal to the administration on an issue, using this model.

CLASS-BUILDING

Grade Level: 4–12

Objective: To establish a feeling of positive rapport in the classroom and to increase each student's sense of belonging

Materials: 5 or more balls of string
scissors (as many as balls of string)

Background Information: An environment of trust and rapport is necessary for a student's self-concept to grow. Students feel more comfortable asking questions in class and interacting with each other when they feel secure. A sense of security allows students to take risks, and learning is often synonymous with risk-taking. This activity is very appropriate early in the year when students are just beginning to get to know one another.

Setting the Tone: Show students the string and scissors. Tell them they are to cut a length of string and then pass the string and scissors along to the next person. Do not tell the student how much string to take or what will be done with it.

Student Learning: After each student has a piece of string, ask the group to form a circle. Ask students to think about what autobiographical information they would like to share with the rest of the group. Tell them that they will wrap the string around their fingers as they tell their life stories to the group, coming to a stop when the string runs out. (Since some students have taken more string than others, their sketches will be longer.)

Guided Practice: Model the desired behavior by being the first to share. This helps to create a better environment for risk-taking. Remind students that the person who is sharing is the only one who has the floor and that there will be time for comments later. It is important that students have the opportunity to speak without interruption so they feel they have the attention of their classmates. Have students begin their stories. Ask students to share those important experiences (beginning with early childhood) which have left strong impressions on their personalities.

Feedback: Ask:

1. What did you learn about a classmate that you didn't know before?
2. Did you feel closer to another person when you learned about his/her experiences and feelings?

3. How did you feel about taking the risk of sharing your life with others?
4. If you could do this activity again, would you give the same information, or would you change the story you told in some way? If so, what way?
5. Why is it important for us to know one another on more than a superficial level?
6. What conditions are necessary for us to feel comfortable with sharing?

Explain to students that as they share their experiences and emotions with each other and experience acceptance and affirmation in the process, they will begin to trust each other. This trust builds a feeling of security in the classroom, and a feeling of security provides a better place to learn and explore.

Compliment Bombarding. Students take turns saying something **positive** about one student in the classroom. This activity continues until every student has been "bombarded" with compliments. No put-downs or negative responses are allowed.

Timelines. Have students work with construction paper and colored pens or crayons to create a timeline of their lives. The project could include people, places, and events that have been important to them. Students not comfortable with illustrating their timelines could cut and paste pictures from magazines. If time permits and students feel secure enough, have them share their timelines orally with the class and/or make a classroom display of the timelines.

FEELING STAR

Grade Level: 4–9

Objective: Students will recognize that there are many ways to respond to a conflict situation and will become aware of how they can affect the outcome with their choice of response.

Materials: "Feeling Star" worksheet—one per student
pens or pencils

Background Information: The "Feeling Star" is designed to allow students to express their feelings on a topic. For this lesson, students will recognize a conflict as a situation where two or more people disagree. Students will also learn that a resolution is possible without getting into a physical altercation. This activity can be used for varying topics and objectives.

Setting the Tone: Ask students to close their eyes for a moment and to try to form mental pictures in response to the following questions:

What picture comes to mind when:

- I say the word "feeling"?
- You hear the word "friend"?
- You see the word "conflict"?
- You hear the phrase, "Can we all get along?"

Student Learning: Tell students that this lesson will allow them to deal with a feeling that affects all of us from time to time—anger.

Distribute the "Feeling Star" worksheet. Tell students they will be writing short sentences or phrases within each of the six points of the star. Ask them to write their names in the center of the star. Starting at point 1, ask students to respond to the questions listed below:

> **Note:** Question 1 always serves as an icebreaker. If something interesting or exciting is going on that involves all students, create your own first question.

Question 1: What is the last "really good" movie you saw (TV or theater)?

Question 2: What two characteristics do you look for in a friend?

Question 3: What characteristic(s) keeps someone from being your friend?

Question 4: What is the first thing you do when a friend makes you angry?

Question 5: What is the first thing you do when a person who isn't your friend makes you angry?

Practice: Tell students that you are saving the last question (point 6 of the star) for the end of the lesson. Allow two minures for students to pair/share their "Feeling Star" responses. At the end of the two minutes, have each pair join another pair to form a cooperative group of four. Have all four group members share their responses.

Extension: Based on their group sharing, have students respond to the following:

What two characteristics are the most important in a friend?

What two characteristics exclude people from being a friend?

Ask:

When people are angry, do you feel they treat friends differently from strangers or acquaintances?

Who do you think is most likely to strike out in anger—a friend or a stranger?

(There are no right or wrong answers.)

Closure: Ask students to close their eyes and to form a mental picture in response to the following situations:

1. Imagine a person you know who has made you angry. How can you deal with your anger and still preserve your friendship?

2. Imagine a person you don't know well, but who has been friendly with you in the past. This person has just made you angry. How will you deal with this situation and preserve a possible friendship?

3. Think of the last time you were angry at someone—friend or acquaintance. How did you deal with that situation?

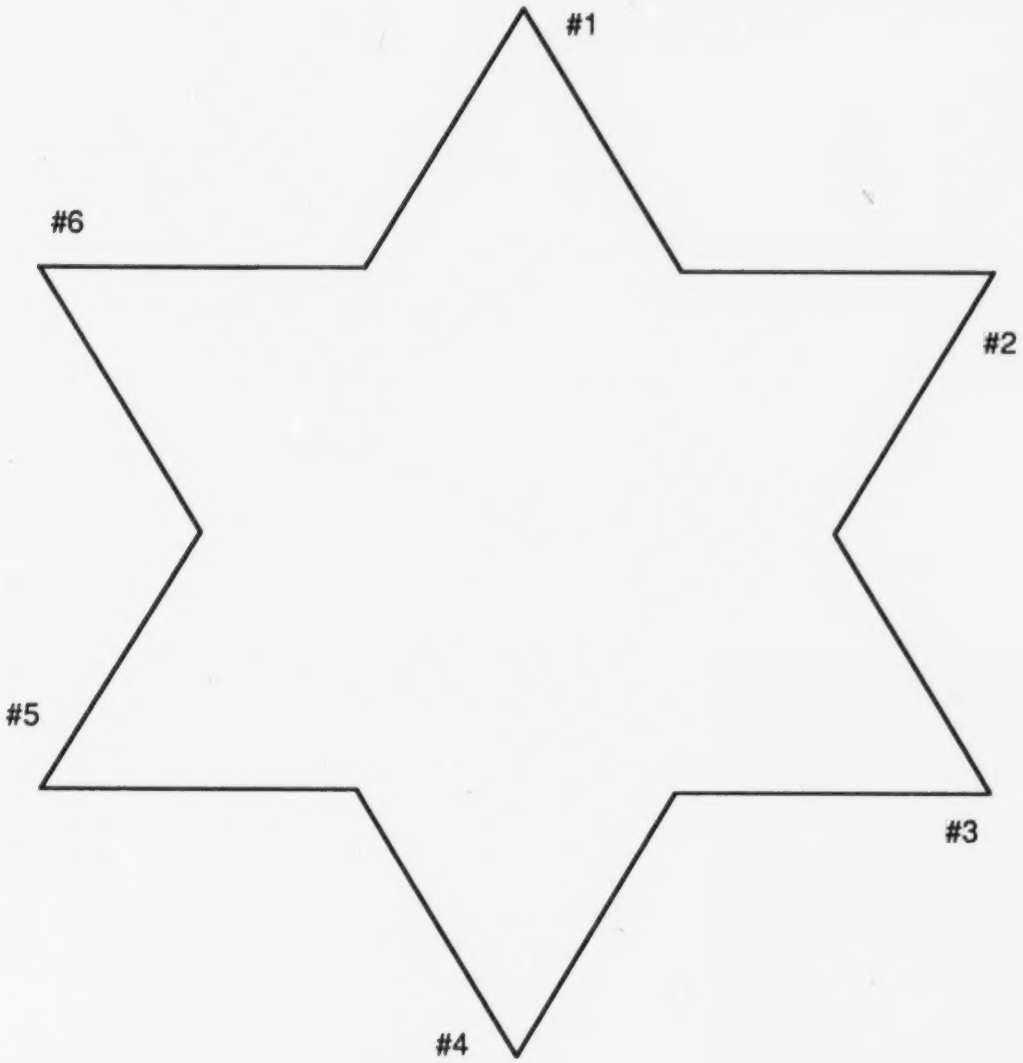
Have students write down on point 6 of their "Feeling Star" how they would deal with situation 3 differently.

Further Extension: Divide students into groups of 4-5. Using another "Feeling Star" diagram, have students place within each star point a typical classroom conflict situation.

Have students discuss how peers can influence or prevent a conflict from occurring. Have students role play each situation on the "Feeling Star" as part of the activity.

Name: _____

FEELING STAR



My Responsibility

Grade Level: 7–9

Objective: To identify individual responsibility in respecting the rights and feelings of the total group

Materials: overhead projector
overhead transparency of "Situations" (see following page)

Setting the Tone: Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviors. For example, if a student feels bored in class, he/she can blame the teacher and (1) tune out, (2) act disruptively, or (3) take responsibility for his/her behavior. The first two choices affect the total group negatively; the third choice respects the rights of the group and may promote change. In the above situation, the student can choose to own some of the responsibility for his/her boredom; in return, the teacher (or another student) can respond with gentle feedback. (Feedback may be defined as letting a person know how one feels or what one observes about the person or situation.)

Student Learning: Have students take turns discussing behavior choices for each of the situations on the following page, keeping in mind that the best choice shows respect for the rights and feelings of others. (Agreement is not necessary.)

This activity allows students to explore their own feelings and attitudes about respect for others and working together.

SITUATIONS

Situation 1: A group of students in class sit together and tell racial/ethnic jokes. You choose to:

_____ do nothing
_____ join in with them
_____ call them names
_____ say to the students that telling racial/ethnic jokes is not funny and is inappropriate
_____ speak privately to their "victims," saying you don't agree
_____ _____ (your suggestion)

Situation 2: You think your idea for the group is the best one. Another student who you feel is "off track" is speaking. The group only has a limited amount of time for discussion. You:

_____ interrupt and take over
_____ give in so his/her feelings aren't hurt
_____ wait until he or she is finished and repeat your own ideas
_____ warn group about the time limit
_____ _____(your suggestion)

Situation 3: A disabled student is entering the class. Special provisions will have to be made. You:

_____ silently sit and stew because you resent having someone different impose upon the class
_____ decide you won't be able to learn as much as you expected and resign yourself
_____ work to have the handicapped student removed from the class
_____ recognize that a disabled student may be challenged is some areas, but not in all
_____ transfer out
_____ _____ (your suggestion)

Situation 4: You and your boyfriend (or girlfriend) have only one class together, and this period is it. You are so happy to be with each other that nothing else seems to matter. You:

_____ do nothing
_____ talk to him/her constantly during class
_____ work together to get the best grade
_____ ask others to pass notes to him/her
_____ stick up for him/her in class no matter what
_____ _____ (your suggestion)

Situation 5: A student of another race is in your group. The student is always quiet. You:

_____ take more time to talk yourself
_____ leave the student alone
_____ ask his/her opinion
_____ try to get to know him/her after class
_____ _____(your suggestion)

NO NAME REACTIONS

Grade Level: 7–9

Objective: To identify one's social behavior style (anonymously); to give and receive feedback about behavior styles in a safe setting

Materials Needed: "No Name" worksheet—one per student
pens or pencils

Background Information: It would be helpful if students have participated in the "Action-Reaction" and understand the meaning of the two terms.

Setting the Tone: This lesson is designed to provide options for individuals to use in conflict situations.

Note: Number the worksheets prior to distribution. **Students names are not to be used**. Students must remember their worksheet numbers in order to reclaim their papers at the end of the activity.

Ask students if they can remember situations where they have said to themselves later , "If I had only known some other things I could have done. . ."

Student Learning: Introduce the concept of social behavior style to the class. Then distribute copies of the "No Name" worksheet, and proceed as follows:

1. Have each student complete the "My Reactions" section of the worksheet. Collect worksheets.

2. Form the class into small groups of 3–5 students. Distribute worksheets on a random basis, one to each group member.

3. Ask groups to respond to the "My Reactions" statements on each worksheet by giving suggestions for more productive behavior. Have them write their responses in the "My Friends' Suggestions" portion.

4. Collect worksheets and place them in several stacks at a central location in the classroom. Have students, a few at a time, reclaim their worksheets (by number).

5. Conclude the activity by asking students for reactions to the suggestions offered. Remind them that feedback does not have to be accepted if it doesn't seem to fit. However, suggestions from friends may offer new insights. Ask: "What was it like to receive suggestions? Did you receive any surprises? Any good ideas?"

NO NAME WORKSHEET

My Reactions

In the spaces below, please write your reaction to each situation.

1. When someone criticizes me, I _____

   _____.

2. What makes me really angry is _____

   _____.

   I react by_____.

3. I feel like saying mean things when_____.

   So I usually say _____

   _____.

4. I hate myself when_____.

   I usually react by feeling _____

   _____.

My Friends' Suggestions

Exchange papers. In the spaces below, please write suggestions for each situation. This paper will be returned to its original owner.

1. When someone criticizes you, you can:
   a. _____.
   b. _____.

2. When you get angry because of what you described, you can instead:
   a. _____.
   b. _____.

3. Instead of saying mean things, you can:
   a. _____.
   b. _____.

4. When you hate yourself because of what you described, you can:
   a. _____.
   b. _____.

EVALUATION ACTIVITY

Grade Level: 7–9

Objective: To assess student progress in understanding how their behavior affects others

Materials Needed: "Assessment" worksheet
pens or pencils

Setting the Tone: Review with students that they have been learning about making decisions and choosing appropriate behaviors. Tell them this exercise will let them "show off" what they have learned.

Student Learning: Give each student an "Assessment" worksheet. Students may work alone or in cooperative groups.

Closure: Discuss **helping** behaviors with students. Ask: "How can we put more of these behaviors into our classroom?"

Discuss behaviors that lead to **conflict**. Ask students to give some examples of these behaviors and describe situations they have observed where they took place. Ask: "What other behaviors could have been used?"

Worksheet

ASSESSMENT

Learning to work with others is one of the most important things that can be learned in school. List below four behaviors exhibited by others *that make it easy for you to work with them.* Explain why each one has this effect.

Behavior 1: _____

Why it helps: _____

Behavior 2: _____

Why it helps: _____

Behavior 3: _____

Why it helps: _____

Behavior 4: _____

Why it helps: _____

List below four behaviors exhibited by others that *contribute to conflicts* among classmates. Explain why each one has this effect.

Behavior 1: _____

Impact on Others: _____

Behavior 2: _____

Impact on Others: _____

Behavior 3: _____

Impact on Others: _____

Behavior 4: _____

Impact on Others: _____

ZIN OBELISK*

Grade Level: 7–12

Objective: Students will practice the cooperative skills required for group problem-solving

Materials Needed:
large newsprint pad and felt-tipped markers OR chalkboard and chalk
paper/pencils
"Zin Obelisk Group Instruction Sheet"—one per student
set of Zin Obelisk Information Cards, one per group (33 cards per set).

Write each piece of information (from sheet included in lesson) on an index card and then laminate the cards. An alternative is to cut the strips and put them in envelopes.

Background Information: Form groups of students before teaching the lesson. At least one student per group should have knowledge of fundamental geometric principles, particulary calculation of the area/volume of a geometric shape. Also useful is the ability to distinguish between essential and nonessential information when problem-solving. However, it is not essential or even desirable that all students possess these skills since one goal of this activity is for students to recognize that many heads are better than one. For example, a student who has the necessary mathematical skills may not have the necessary pieces of information to solve the problem. Therefore, he/she will need to listen to the contributions of other group members. Group members will come to the realization that they all have something to contribute to group problem-solving.

Setting the Tone: Say: "Today we are going to take a look at how groups function together to solve problems more efficiently. Each group member will be given several pieces of information which may or may not be needed to solve the problem. The group must work together to determine which pieces of information are essential to solving the problem. Once the problem is solved, we will discuss how you worked together to reach the solution."

---

* This lesson has been adapted from *A Practical Manual for Team Building* by Dave Francis and Don Young.

Student Learning: Ask students to gather in their pre-arranged groups. Distribute the "Zin Obelisk Group Instruction Sheet" and go over the directions with students. Emphasize that only the group recorders may use pencil and paper as part of the group process.

Guided Practice: Distribute the "Zin Obelisk Information Cards." Have groups discuss content of cards to determine which information is necessary to the solution of the problem. Circulate and assist the groups in maintaining the guidelines. When most groups have completed the task, ask for their answers. Next, go over the correct answer and rationale with the class.

Answer/Rationale

The answer is Neptiminus.

1. The dimensions of the zin indicate that it contains 50,000 cubic feet of stone blocks.
2. The blocks are 1 cubic foot each, therefore 50,000 blocks are required.
3. Each worker works 7 schlibs in a day (2 schlibs are devoted to rest).
4. Each worker lays 150 blocks per schlib, therefore each worker lays 1050 blocks per day.
5. There are 8 workers per day, therefore, 8,400 blocks are laid per working day.
6. The 50,000th block, therefore, is laid on the sixth day of work.
7. Since work does not take place on Daydoldrum, the sixth day of work is Neptiminus.

Feedback: Discuss the process by asking questions such as:

1. What behavior helped the group accomplish the task?
2. What behavior hindered the group in completing the task?
3. How did leadership emerge in the team?
4. Who participated most?
5. Who participated least?
6. What feeling(s) did you experience as the task progressed?
7. What suggestions would you make to improve team performance?

Closure: Say: "Sometimes we don't realize all of the benefits we gain by working together. Not only do we solve problems and accomplish tasks more efficiently, but often the quality of the work is improved by the input of the group. In addition, our relationships with other people grow and become richer when we share constructive experiences. Successful relationships add meaning to our lives."

ZIN OBELISK GROUP INSTRUCTION SHEET

In the ancient city of Atlantis, a solid, rectangular obelisk called a zin was built to honor the goddess Tina. The structure took less than two weeks to complete.

The task of your team is to determine on which day of the week the obelisk was completed. You have 25 minutes for this task. Do not choose a formal leader.

You will be given cards containing information related to the task. You may share this information orally, but you may not show your cards to other participants. One person may act as recorder, using pencil and paper to calculate or draw charts, but all other input must be verbal.

ZIN OBELISK INFORMATION CARDS

1. The basic measurement of time in Atlantis is a day.
2. An Atlantian day is divided into schlibs and ponks.
3. The length of the zin is 50 feet.
4. The height of the zin is 100 feet.
5. The width of the zin is 10 feet.
6. The zin is built of stone blocks.
7. Each block is 1 cubic foot.
8. Day 1 in the Atlantian week is called Aquaday.
9 Day 2 in the Atlantian week is called Neptiminus.
10. Day 3 in the Atlantian week is called Sharkday.
11. Day 4 in the Atlantian week is called Mermaidday.
12. Day 5 in the Atlantian week is called Daydoldrum.
13. There are five days in an Atlantian week.
14. The working day has 9 schlibs.
15. Each worker takes rest periods during the working day totaling 16 ponks.
16. There are 8 ponks in a schlib.
17. Worker each lay 150 blocks per schlib.
18. At any time when work is taking place there is a gang of 9 people on site.
19. One member of each gang has religious duties and does not lay blocks.
20. No work takes place on Daydoldrum.
21. What is a cubitt?
22. A cubitt is a cube, all sides of which measure 1 megalithic yard.
23. There are 3 1/2 feet in a megalithic yard.
24. Does work take place on Sunday?
25. What is a zin?
26. Which way up does the zin stand?
27. The zin is made up of green blocks.
28. Green has special religious significance on Mermaidday.
29. Each gang includes two women.
30. Work starts at daybreak on Aquaday.
31. Only one gang is working on the construction of the zin.
32. There are eight gold scales in a gold fin.
33. Each block costs 2 gold fins.

APPENDIX

San Diego City Schools
School Services Division - Area V
Race/Human Relations

Administrative Crisis Response
Denial to Acceptance

> . . . Administrators are likely to avoid direct intervention in intergroup conflict, at least initially, for two reasons. First, they may be highly uncertain about the possible consequences of any direct intervention. Second, they do not want to admit that conflict exists and is so serious that it exceeds the capacity of the conflicting parties to resolve it themselves.

This paper will focus on the reactions of principals to on-site intergroup conflicts and intervention strategies. It will specifically explore the question of why principals frequently respond in a defensive or denial mode when faced with intergroup conflict.

Due to the changing demographics of schools, intergroup conflicts are becoming the norm rather than the exception, and intervention or assistance from "outsiders" is becoming more commonplace. These challenges require creative long-term solutions rather than "band-aid" approaches. Keeping the lid on, ignoring the problem and hoping that it will evaporate into thin air or resolve itself, merely addressing the immediate symptoms – these are ineffective tools. Unfortunately, as Reitz (1977) suggests, when these tactics are chosen, "the conflict often does not fade away but grows and envelops more and more people." (p. 447)

Several critical concerns have been identified by top level district administrators regarding the principals' response mechanisms to conflict/crisis and intervention techniques. Quite often principals facing crisis situations become defensive and extremely concerned about written reports and the confidentiality of this information. This defensiveness has been seen in their interactions with the media, parents, and the community. In general, the principals' actions in this mode are reactive rather than proactive.

In addition, a mismatch between what a principal perceives as proactive behavior and his/her supervisor's perception(s) of this behavior may also occur. Some principals appear to become protective of their status during crisis and want to maintain their relationships with staff members. These administrators tend to verbalize their feelings by saying that they cannot ask their staffs to do one more thing because they are already working extremely hard. Therefore, these principals do not rally their troops to assist with developing and implementing appropriate solutions. It is interesting to observe

this protective mechanism being utilized by some administrators while their building is being engulfed in a human inferno of conflict.

In field observations, principals seem to want assistance when initially faced with inter-group conflict. Specialized teams may be called upon to provide assessments, mediation, and/or direct crisis intervention. In the initial planning and interview phase this intervention is accepted with open arms and in a collaborative manner. However, once the agreed upon assistance procedure has been completed and a written report is produced, apprehension and anxiety increase on the part of the site administrator. An approach-avoidance mechanism is highly apparent as the administrator who requested help may not be willing to accept the results of the formal report.

This mechanism is characterized by defensiveness and protective comments such as, "You're not telling us anything we didn't already know." "Who will get a copy of the report and why do my superiors need one?" "How are we going to keep the report away from the media?" "How confidential is the report?" Sometimes the information collected may later be labeled as "skewed" because only a small portion of the site population was involved in the interview sessions. This is true even when these groups were recommended by the administrator for interviews.

There is also a great deal of concern by administrators regarding how they will be perceived by their superiors for calling in outside intervention. Principals often express comments such as, "Will they see me as weak and incapable of handling my own school?" and "Everyone will know about the problems." Some principals have stated these concerns openly and feel that they were "burned" because their supervisors were privy to crisis information. Others feel that their immediate supervisors should be informed of crises and any reports resulting from outside intervention. However, they feel that it is their responsibility, rather than the assessment team's, to provide the supervisors with this information.

Some principals also express a great deal of apprehension when they feel that the assistant superintendent for their area has a copy of their confidential report. These principals frequently ask, "Why does he/she need a copy? – He/she is not my boss."

Bottoni (1984) found that,

> Principals have been evaluated indirectly in terms of their ability to satisfy or please their superiors. In fact, the results of such an evaluation have been a negative force, one that operates whenever an administrator or supervisor experiences problems in areas such as student discipline, staff morale, or community dissatisfaction. The administrator who maneuvers in ways to placate various populations with which he

> has contact is often assumed to be a capable person, an assumption that may have had little relationship to an affirmative leadership or good management style. (p. 5)

Therefore, principals want to stay in the good graces of their superiors and feel that crisis situations might sound the alarm to their supervisors that perhaps they are incapable of handling these situations.

Intergroup crisis generally triggers the defensive mechanism and denial among principals regardless of ethnicity. This information is significant because often we have misperceptions that a principal who is of the same race as those in conflict will not be defensive or go through the denial stage, when in reality this is not true. Reitz (1977) calls this "The Ego-Defensive Function" (p. 261). He describes this function as one in which "attitudes may serve to protect one's ego from unpleasant or threatening knowledge about oneself or one's environment. Accepting threatening information can produce anxiety; developing certain attitudes can distort or blackout such information and reduce anxiety." (p. 261)

This "ego-defensive function" can also be viewed as a part of the "grief cycle." This cycle includes several stages which may help explain the process that principals go through when faced with intergroup crisis.

Simos (1979) points out that:

> Loss can take many forms. It is most profound and most easily recognized when it involves the loss of life – our own or that of a significant other person. (Significance does not mean loved; it means rather important in some way.) Loss is also recognized without difficulty when it involves valuable material objects, such as the loss of a home or business, of valuable possessions having monetary or sentimental value.
>
> There are other losses, however, that are much more subtle. When they occur we may be aware of having gone through a painful experience, but we do not recognize that experience as a loss. Friends and professional helpers may miss the loss aspect as well. Examples of such experiences are minor failures, events causing shame or embarrassment or disappointments. The Oriental value of "loss of face" gives recognition to the loss aspect of these experiences. Such losses may go unnoticed but leave their impact anyway. If the loss itself is unnoticed, in all likelihood the reaction to the loss will also be misunderstood because it is cut off in our thinking from the precipitating event. The ensuing result may be that we see someone in a full-blown normal grief reaction, but inasmuch as no one has recognized that a loss has occurred, the behavior may seem as disturbed or pathological rather than as normal. (p. 19)

The grief cycle includes several stages which are commonly referred to as:

Initial Responses to Loss
1. Shock
2. Alarm and Anxiety
3. Fear

Stages of Grief
1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

According to Simos (1979) these stages can be defined and characterized as follows:

1. Shock
   Shock is defined as a sudden, violent, or upsetting disturbance.

2. Alarm and Anxiety
   The reaction to shock is alarm. Alarm is defined as fear or anxiety caused by the sudden realization of danger. Alarm can be set off by any unfamiliar or unexpected situation.
   Shock, alarm, and anxiety can serve as a protective function in keeping away a flood of emotion which the person may be unable to cope with.

3. Fear
   We may fear danger from outside forces or even fear our own destructive impulses. On the other hand, the fear of loss can also act as a spur to mastery.

4. Denial
   Denial is usually an unconscious defense used to reduce, avoid, or prevent anxiety which arises from an objective danger. It is the earliest defense to emerge in psychic development, the most persistent of all defenses, and a normal part of ego development. Some denial is necessary at every stage of life to make life bearable. Denial operates by shutting that which is too disturbing out of one's awareness. The infant does it by closing his eyes and turning his head away. We speak of people who hide their heads in the sand, or sweep their worries under the rug.
   Shame can be an extremely painful feeling and people will erect powerful unconscious defenses as well as conscious maneuvers to avoid the pain of this

feeling. How many times has an unemployed man left the house in the morning pretending he was going to work at a job no longer his? Repression is the most primitive and basic defense against feelings of shame, often through denial of the loss itself. Repression can also take the form of screening out the impact of the loss. Overwhelming criticism can push one to the point of despair. If attacks are too massive, a person, to preserve a sense of self, will "turn off" emotionally to any criticism that would arouse shame or anxiety. Some people defend against shame by becoming combative and belligerent, or suddenly finding fault in another to justify pulling away.

5. Anger
   There are some people who handle uncomfortable feelings by denying the feelings (guilt, shame, helplessness) and lashing out in anger at any convenient scapegoat.

6. Bargaining
   Bargaining is a part of everyday life. Bargaining is used when facing examinations, job interviews, and other desired or feared pending goals or outcomes. It is a reflection of the awareness that often our best efforts are not enough to insure success and that chance does play a part in our life. Bargaining takes over when human powers are exhausted.

7. Depression
   Depression is often the result of repressed anger. Hopelessness in depression appears as indecisiveness, paralysis about action, increased demands on others, feelings of unworthiness and guilt, and projection of hopelessness on another.

8. Acceptance
   The emotionally healthy person is able to carry on daily life tasks, regress to dependency and helplessness during a surge of grief, and return again to some level of adequate functioning.

These stages can be summarized in a nutshell as,

1. Denial and shock - "Not me!"
2. Anger and irritability - "Why me?"
3. Bargaining - "If I promise this, or do that, everything will work out."
4. Depression and beginning acceptance - "It is me. There is a problem."
5. Complete acceptance - "O.K. This is the situation."

The literature tends to suggest that denial is normal. If crisis is equated with the grief cycle, the behaviors manifested by principals in case after case would seem to be part of

a normal human response to crisis stimuli. The significant question might be how can principals quickly go from the denial stage to acceptance and action.

It is hypothesized that several things will need to be in place for the transition from denial to acceptance and action to occur, and that "outsiders" can play a significant and valuable role in assisting principals through this transition. According to Arends (1977), "Outsideness" can be defined as "teachers in 'other' schools, personnel from the district office, and consultants . . . ." (p. 23)

Site administrators must be assured by district administrators that it is O.K. to ask for help in crisis situations, so that this type of assistance is not perceived as being any different than asking for help in content areas. The perceived social stigma of having a crisis must be eliminated and a value shift must occur that enables and empowers administrators to address crises in creative and perhaps nonconventional ways.

This value shift can be facilitated by area operations via personalization and verbalization of the concept that *it's O.K. and expected that site administrators will ask for assistance during intergroup conflict in much the same way that the fire department is called to put out a fire.* In this case the administrator is penalized only if he/she fails to take the proper action and does not call the fire department. With the reinforcement of the O.K. for intervention, a significant level of trust must be established between the administrator, area operations personnel, and the consultant.

It is also interesting to note that in the cases where area operations personnel direct principals to contact outside sources for assistance to crisis, the denial phase is much shorter and acceptance occurs more rapidly. Administrators who are close to retirement are frequently not threatened by written reports and stated that they feel comfortable with their supervisor about having a report. They also seem more accepting of assistance. However, frequently they want outsiders to come in and do it all while they play the role of the silent partner.

We also have to make it safe for administrators to identify and address potential crisis situations in timely and proactive ways. Administrators need to be encouraged to keep their ear to the ground to maintain constant contact with the pulse beats of the school (students, parents, staff, and the broader community) so that plans may be developed before crises occur.

Along with making it safe, building trust and shifting our values must come training for principals in group dynamics, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving techniques.

> Adequate, appropriate, and systematic inservice training is essential if an educational change is to be implemented effectively (Klansmeier, 1978). Such

> training should help existing staff members acquire the understanding, skills, and ATTITUDES required to perform their expanded roles effectively. (Neiner, 1978)

Administrators are being asked on a daily basis to utilize creative problem-solving techniques, especially since additional resources and personnel are not readily available. We often assume that they know how to do this and that they feel skilled in group dynamics. However, more often than not, they are not trained in these aspects of their job. Reitz (1977) cautions that,

> creative behavior in organizations is not simply a matter of selection and training. The organization itself can impede or facilitate the creative process . . . . Anxiety, fear of evaluation, defensiveness, and cultural inhibition have all been suggested as blocks to the realization of creative potential . . . (p. 242). Certain aids to creative behavior have been identified. They include reinforcement, goals, and deadlines, extended effort, and freedom and autonomy. (p. 245)

This information on training and the creative process has definite implications for leadership development and specifically the district's leadership seminar. Seminars which consist primarily of giving information, and call for participants to exhaust their memorization skills with very few opportunities for practical application of skills and little attention to participants' attitudes, tend to hinder rather than promote successful school administration. One participant of the leadership seminar expressed concern with the process by saying, "You can train people to write and remember, but can they do?" In times of crisis, the ability to *do* effectively is critical. Therefore, the seminar should become more like a practicum and provide participants with the opportunity to practice and develop their "people skills."

Consideration might also be given to implementing an internship process for prospective administrators in which they could be mentored by administrators who possess excellent people skills, value diversity and transmit this value via creative problem-solving techniques, exhibit minimal defensiveness, are active listeners, collaborate with staff, parents, and students – in short, administrators who are proactive in their responses to their changing clients.

To address the challenges of cultural diversity, current demographic trends, and educational concerns in a meaningful way, administrators must be armed with a variety of skills and abilities. In times of crisis, people skills, the ability to accurately analyze problems which most likely do not fit our paradigm, and the ability to get beyond the denial stage to acceptance and action are absolutely essential. This process can be facilitated by "outsiders;" however, they cannot implement and maintain long-term solutions. They cannot come in and solve the problems by providing one dose of medication.

Administrators must receive effective practical training which goes beyond rote memorization. They must understand that problems are not inherently bad and that crisis or conflicts are a normal part of life, just as denial is a normal human response to these challenges. However, we cannot let these responses paralyze us into non-action or inappropriate action based solely on symptoms. We must constantly dig for the truth. Though sometimes painful, the truth will set us free to act in responsible ways that can make a positive difference for our children.

Prepared by Dr. Francine Williams, Instructional Team Leader, Race/Human Relations. 7/3/89, revised 2/9/94.

FW:rr
HDAdminCrisisRspns2.94

San Diego City Schools
Lewis Junior High School

LA Trial Action Plan

The following action plan is designed to minimize disruption in response to *anticipated* verdicts in the LA trial.

Throughout the plan are two basic expectations:

1. We expect students to have a variety of emotional reactions to these events. We want to use this experience as an opportunity to teach appreciation for differing points of view and a respect for the feelings and safety of fellow students.

2. We expect adults on campus to manage the situation and direct appropriate responses for students both in discussion and behavior.

Plan

I ANTICIPATION--prior to the verdicts

A. A Race Human Relation Lesson—and a Curriculum Project centered on the judicial system will be presented. Students should discuss many of the issues ahead of time. Lessons about discrimination will be presented by our Race and Human Relations Facilitator. A series of lessons about the judicial system will be developed by parents and teachers.

B. A Series of Letters from the Principal will outline what we are doing ahead of time and request that parents discuss the issues with their children. The letter will ask parents to remind children of common politeness and a respect for each other's civil rights.

C. Homeroom Discussions will begin teaching the elements of how to discuss a controversial topic showing respect for differing points of view and using much of the guidelines from *World of Difference (R.O.P.E.S.)*.

D. Teachers will be given Two Training Sessions.
1. Leading discussion of controversial issues
2. Supervision

E. Groups of Students Will Meet prior to the verdict to discuss with administration how to help other students treat each other kindly and politely after the verdicts. These include ASB(Morgan), Peer Counselors(Keyser), Latina Starrs(Starr), Gentlemen of Quality (Walker&Scott), Hispanic Male Focus Group(Walker&Swigart), Monitors(Holmes), Academically Equipped Atheletes(Konarska&Kylander), Yearbook(Christensen), Peer Tutors(Beretz), Save Club(Rasmussen) and non-traditional leaders(Vice Principals and Principal).

F. Through letters, talks and announcements students will be told quite clearly—**Violence or remarks that incite violence will not be tolerated. The strongest disciplinary action will** be taken against students who take advantage of an unsettled situation by either threatening or carrying out physical attacks or those whose statements inflame or incite violence.

II COUNSELING AND DISCUSSION

If verdicts are controversial and disorder is occurring we will need to have students discussing the issues in a structured forum. The best forum is in integrated groups where students know each other and there is adult supervision. This is homeroom.

If it looks like we need to, we will extend homeroom by not ringing the bell. We will post this message in the teachers mailbox room:

"EXTENDED HOMEROOM- PLEASE LEAD DISCUSSION ON TRIALS".

However, if the bell does not ring **DO NOT** dismiss students. If we extend homeroom one of our goals is to keep students supervised inside the rooms. If you dismiss students there is a possibility that they will roam around and be a problem.

Formats and directions for teachers will be developed by a team of teachers. The key is that adults direct the discussion in a way that recognizes the diverse opinions but respects each person's civil rights and safety.

Counseling personnel (Holmes, Keyser, Ziff, Walker, Bass, Gay, Duel, McGough, McKellogg, Hinsvark), will be available to talk with students. However, we do not want students "wandering" on campus. Counselors, IA's, and Administrators will be out on Campus. You may just call one of us over to talk. There will also be a Special Counseling Request form attached. These will be picked up each period by a counseling representative. Someone will come to class to get the student. Any request to use the phone should be channeled this way.

III SUPERVISION

Supervision begins with teachers arriving at school early. This will necessitate a phone tree so teachers can arrive at school prior to 6:45AM. The principal will initiate the phone tree based on information she receives from a designated trial watcher or the news.

SUPERVISION PLAN

The plan begins with normal supervision, but it is key to the plan that all teachers be at their duty posts at 7 AM. Students will be required to stay in their regular assigned areas before school (lunch court or P.E. area).

Extra duty stations will be assigned. Teachers who are not assigned should stand at their door and supervise the indicated area. See attached map. (This map should be referred to as our **"Potential Disruption Supervision Schedule"** and filed with **Emergency Procedures** in your Faculty Handbook.)

After homeroom, ALL teachers will need to stand at their doors for passing periods. Teachers should intervene quickly in any potential problem. Groups of students should be broken up by walking into the group and directing students to move to class.

Supervision IA's, counselors, administrators, and T.A.'s will circulate in the halls. If all staff work together students will follow directions.

If disorder occurs as a result of the verdicts in the L.A. trials then student safety (ie supervision) must take precedence over academics.

Before School Supervision
(A-H)

*Indicates before school area leader

A. PE

Morgan*/D.Grant (TA)	On field
Konarska/Barrett	Between girls gym and fence
Kylander/Allor/ Fleckner	Breezeway between boys gym and 100 Bldg

Supervise students on PE fields by being with them. Block students from going into center of campus between the girls gym and the fence and the breezeway.

B. Westside of School

Ogden
Trim
Starkey
Watkins*

Keep students on campus sending them either to PE or back to the lunch court area.

C. Front of School

Harris**	McGough
Meredith*	Meredith (I.A.#1.)
Easley	Buechner
Holmes	Keyser
Crawford	Swigart

Welcome students from the bus. Direct students to the lunch court area. Make sure students do not go down the west side of school or the hallway between the office and the auditorium. Make sure all students move into the lunch court area.

The key is to move students into the lunch court where they will be supervised. Their only route will be to PE down the breezeway between the stage and the 100 and 200 Bldg. This will be supervised.

D. Assigned teacher/ Unassigned teachers with rooms in the 100 and 200 building

No students should be in this area. Especially check the front of the hallway near the lunch court to assure students do not come in the interior area.

E. Teachers in the 400 Bldg Library and Near Bungalows

Insure that students do not go past the breezeway between the library and faculty bathroom. Help contain students in this area except for hallway to P.E.
In general gauge the situation—be informed and friendly with students. Do not over-react, but observe and intervene.

F. Teachers in the Far Bungalows

Students should not be in this area at all. Escort students to the lunch court area.

G.&H. Lunch Court

Williams	Rye(I.A.#2)
Kidd(I.A.#3)	Walker
Scott	Ziff
Jaquez	2 Assigned Teachers
Christensen	Stevensen
King	

Supervise students— mingle with students, talk with them. Help contain students in this area except from Hallway to P.E. In general gauge the situation—be informed and friendly with students. Do not over-react but observe and intervene.

Passing Periods

The school is divided into six zones similar to before and after school supervision (see attached map). Each zone has a zone leader. The zone leaders in addition to counselors and vice principals will have authority to send students home if they witness student behavior that is violent or incites violence.

Kim Cole and Monica Rance will be in the ISS room to make a scripted call to parents to come to pick up children. Zone Leaders may escort students to ISS to be sent home

Zone Leaders:	A. PE	Morgan
	B. Westside of School	Watkins
	C. Between 100 and 200	Scott
	D. Between 200 and 300	Valencia
	E. East side of school near 400	Torres
	F. North end of Campus	King

Counselors, Administrators and Supervision I.A's will be assigned around the school and will be out during passing periods. In addition, Counselors and Administrators will circulate through classes to see if teachers need any help.

Lunch Time

In addition to regular supervision, the following prep period teachers will be assigned:

Allor/Barrett	PE
Fleckner	West side of school
Crawford/Stevensen	Lunch court
Kylander	Interior hallways

During their lunch periods, unassigned teachers are encouraged to supervise and observe in lunch court and hallways.

IV. Rumor Control

It is of the utmost importance that we convey to all students that we the adults are in control and we the adults will protect all students. Remind students that much of what they hear will be rumors. The principal will issue an information bulletin to dispell rumors and to communicate facts as needed.

Wendy Gay and Ellen Tiffany will be the press contact and will be located in the office.

Office staff will be instructed in answering questions and directing parent inquiries.

Trained parents will be available in the office to handle parent phone calls or visits. They will be called on the same phone tree with teachers.

Only adults with visitors badges or district I.D. will be allowed on campus. All others should be referred to the office

Please do not play news on T.V.

Classroom phones are to be unplugged and locked away.

If we have extended homeroom there will be no late buses.

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Task	Person Responsible	Due
1. Race and Human Relations Lesson	Rowan, King, &Wood	2/26
2. Principal Letter	Harris	3/5
3. Supervision Schedule	Williams	3/5
4 . Phone Tree	Williams	3/5
5. Counseling Office Inservice	Holmes	3/8
6. Office Staff Inservice	Williams	3/8
7. Supervision/Teacher Training Sessions	Williams	3/11 2:15-3:15
8. Select and Train Parents	Harris/Rowan	3/15
9. Press Contact	Gay/Tiffany	3/15
10. Lessons for Homeroom	Walker, Rowan &Teachers	3/15
11. Assemble Blue Slips Sign-out Sheets and Phone #'s	Cole	3/15
12. Judicial System Lessons	Harris and Committee of Parents &Teachers	3/15
13 Teacher Training in Homeroom Lesson	Walker& Teachers Group and Rowan	3/22 2:15-3:45
14. Develop "Special Counseling Request" form	Holmes	3/30
15. Run Current List of Students for Cole	Tiffany	4/1
16. Counseling Contact Groups/Organization	Meredith	4/1

GW/sg: 3/4/93

MANAGING CONFLICT - SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Use additional pages, if necessary.

Grade Level :_____

Type of Problem: _____

Background on Problem :_____

_____

_____

Solution: _____

_____

_____

_____

Follow-up Procedure: _____

_____

_____

_____

Name of School (Optional): _____

Contact Person (Optional): _____

(Return this form to Race/Human Relations, Dana Center.)